

Henriette A. Delamarre-van de Waal (ed): Abnormalities in puberty. Scientific and clinical advances

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This book of 180 pages was edited as one of the issues in the series “Endocrine Development”. The eleven chapters present various aspects of puberty, from very general to highly specialized information. On more general aspects of the whole process of pubertal maturation, many interesting findings are described and documented. The secular trend towards earlier onset of puberty and increased adult height, which occurred during the past century, seems to slow down, according to recent studies. Of interest for the general paediatrician are also observations from the United States on girls with very early onset of puberty. Despite this early onset, the whole period of pubertal maturation is not terminated earlier, arguing for a slowing of the process. An interesting hypothesis concerning the cause of earlier onset in girls with overweight is related to the fact that estrogens are stored in fat tissue. Increased fat

mass might therefore contribute to an earlier onset of pubertal maturation.

In the more specialized information, new data on normal and abnormal pubertal development related to prematurity, intrauterine growth retardation, nutrition, and bone growth and mineralization are presented underlining once more the importance of events in childhood for diseases of the adult. One chapter is devoted to present and future options for the preservation of fertility in female adolescents with cancer. The necessity to address these problems has grown with increased long term survival of these patients. Although there are no simple and good solutions today, different ways of trying to improve techniques are discussed.

Taken together, this book provides a very interesting issue on a period of life which is of special interest to any paediatrician.
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